

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 IO-13 ISO-00 AID-05 CEA-01 CIAE-00 COME-00
EB-08 EA-10 FRB-03 INR-10 NEA-10 NSAE-00 ICA-11
OPIC-03 SP-02 TRSE-00 LAB-04 SIL-01 AGRE-00
OMB-01 SS-15 HA-05 NSC-05 PA-01 /121 W
-----055301 260700Z /23

R 260555Z APR 78
FM AMEMBASSY PARIS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0615
INFO ALL OECD CAPITALS
AMEMBASSY BELGRADE
AMEMBASSY BERLIN
AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST
AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY PRAGUE
AMEMBASSY SOFIA
AMEMBASSY WARSAW
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
USMISSION GENEVA

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AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS ALSO FOR USEEC

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: ELAB, FR
SUBJECT: FRENCH UNION'S IRRITATION WITH ICFTU ON
EASTERN EUROPEAN ISSUES

1. SUMMARY: FO, WHICH HELPED STAGE A PRESS CONFERENCE
IN BEHALF OF THE FREE WORKER MOVEMENTS IN EASTERN
EUROPE, IS IRRITATED BY THE ICFTU'S SEEMING INDIFFER-
ENCE TO THE SITUATION IN THE SOCIALIST COUNTRIES,
AND IS TALKING ABOUT SETTING UP SOME KIND OF RECEPTION
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CENTER FOR DISSIDENTS WHO LEAVE THEIR HOMELANDS.
END SUMMARY.

2. ON APRIL 18, THERE WAS A PRESS CONFERENCE IN
PARIS IN SUPPORT OF THE EMBRYONIC FREE WORKER GROUPS
IN EASTERN EUROPE. THE MEETING WAS CALLED IN RESPONSE
TO AN APPEAL FOR FRENCH LABOR'S AID BY EDMUND BALKA,

A POLE IDENTIFIED AS THE FORMER PRESIDENT OF THE STETTIN STRIKE COMMITTEE OF 1970-71; VICTOR FEINBERG, LISTED AS A SOVIET AND ONE OF THE PARTICIPANTS IN THE AUGUST 1968 RED SQUARE DEMONSTRATION AGAINST THE INVASION OF CZECHOSLOVAKIA; AND VASILE PARASCHIV, A FORMER MEMBER OF THE ROMANIAN CP SAID TO BE GETTING READY TO RETURN TO ROMANIA TO CONTINUE THE STRUGGLE THERE FOR A FREE LABOR MOVEMENT. THEIR JOINT APPEAL WAS DIRECTED TO THE FOUR LARGEST FRENCH LABOR FEDERATIONS: THE COMMUNIST CGT, THE ANTI-COMMUNIST FO, AND THE SOCIALIST-ORIENTED CFDT AND FEN; AND THE PRESS CONFERENCE WAS NOMINALLY SPONSORED BY ALL FOUR FEDERATIONS. IN FACT, HOWEVER, IT WAS LARGELY PUT TOGETHER BY FO, FEN, AND SOME TROTSKYITE GROUPS, AND THE CGT WAS MANEUVERED INTO JOINING IN, OR RISK UNDERCUTTING ITS OWN POSITION AT THE WFTU CONGRESS IN PRAGUE (SEE SEPTTEL).

3. THE PRESS CONFERENCE ITSELF, FROM THE POINT OF VIEW OF THE ORGANIZERS, WAS A SUCCESS. HOWEVER, ALEXANDER SMOLAR, ANOTHER POLISH EMIGRE, SUBSTITUTED FOR BALKA; AND A CZECH, JEAN LESTINSKY, IDENTIFIED AS HEAD OF A PRE-1968 CZECH TRADE UNION, WAS ADDED TO THE GROUP. BACKGROUND MATERIAL ON THE SITUATIONS IN ALL FOUR COUNTRIES WAS DISTRIBUTED; A FAIR AMOUNT OF LOCAL PUBLICITY WAS OBTAINED; AND THE FOUR FRENCH LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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UNIONS WERE ATTACKED BY TASS, WHICH SUGGESTED THEY WOULD DO BETTER TO LOOK AFTER THE RIGHTS OF THE MILLION FRENCH UNEMPLOYED. THE FOUR UNIONS WERE ALSO THANKED, ACCORDING TO AFP, BY VSEVELOD KOUVAKINE, MOSCOW SPOKESMAN OF THE INDEPENDENT UNION RECENTLY FORMED IN THE USSR, WHO ALSO APPEALED FOR THEIR FURTHER SUPPORT IN GETTING THE FOUR ARRESTED MEMBERS OF THE GROUP RELEASED.

4. IN FO'S OPINION, THESE SUCCESSES CONTRAST ALL THE MORE STARKLY WITH THE FAILURE OF THE ICFTU (IN UNSPOKEN CONTRAST TO THE CGT) TO TAKE UP THE ISSUE OF THE TRADE UNION RIGHTS. ON MARCH 3, FO WROTE THE ICFTU HEADQUARTERS PROPOSING THAT THE INCLUSION OF AN ITEM ON THE EASTERN EUROPEAN SITUATION ON THE AGENDA FOR THE MAY 16-19 EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING. THAT AGENDA HAS NOW ARRIVED IN PARIS, AND THERE IS NO MENTION OF EASTERN EUROPE ON IT.

5. FO WILL WRITE THE ICFTU AGAIN ON THIS POINT, BUT PRIVATELY IT TELLS US IT IS VERY DISCOURAGED BY THE SITUATION. IN FO'S OPINION -- AND IN THE OPINION

OF SOME OF THE EMIGRES SUCH AS FEINBERG -- THE
WESTERN EUROPEAN TRADE UNION CENTRALS SEEM TOO
DEEPLY COMMITTED, POLITICALLY, TO WORKING WITH THE
EASTERN EUROPEAN OFFICIAL TRADE UNIONS TO WANT TO
FIGHT WITH THEM OVER THE DISSIDENTS. IN THIS CON-
NECTION, FO FEELS THAT MANY OF THE EUROPEAN UNIONS

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R 260555Z APR 78
FM AMEMBASSY PARIS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0616
INFO ALL OECD CAPITALS
AMEMBASSY BELGRADE
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AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST
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ARE FORGETTING THAT THE OFFICIAL UNIONS OF THE
SOCIALIST COUNTRIES ARE SAID TO BE AMONGST THE MOST
DETESTED FEATURES OF THE COMMUNIST STATE APPARATUS;
AND THAT BY TREATING THEM AS EQUALS, THE WESTERNERS
ARE RUINING NOT THEIR OWN IMAGES AND REPUTATION, BUT
THAT OF FREE TRADE UNIONISM IN GENERAL.

6. FO IS ALSO CONCERNED THAT THE FAILURE OF THE WESTERN UNIONS TO TAKE A MORE POSITIVE ROLE IN HELPING THE DISSIDENT EASTERN EUROPEANS IS CREATING A LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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SITUATION WHEREBY THE EXILES AND VISITORS ARE FALLING INTO THE HANDS OF THE TROTSKYITES AND OTHER FRINGE GROUPS, WHO TRY TO USE THEM FOR THEIR OWN PURPOSES (SUCH AS APPARENTLY HAPPENED IN CONNECTION WITH THE PARIS PRESS CONFERENCE). THUS, FO IS TALKING, PUBLICLY, ABOUT SETTING UP SOME KIND OF RECEPTION CENTER FOR EASTERN EUROPEAN LABOR FIGURES TO PREVENT THIS.

7. THE PRINTED MATERIAL DISTRIBUTED AT THE PRESS CONFERENCE CONCERNING THE INDEPENDENT LABOR GROUPS IN POLAND, THE SOVIET UNION, ROMANIA, AND CZECHOSLOVAKIA ARE BEING POUCHED TO THE RESPECTIVE EMBASSIES.
GAMMON

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